

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior listings of claims in this application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for validating users of communications services, comprising:

generating records for communications service users by at least one service provider, said records store information relating to said communications service users including:

legal liability information;

an originator type code; and

a validation code assigned to selected originator type codes, said validation code operable for facilitating validation of said communications service users, the validation code including an encrypted key that is to be decrypted by a receiving service provider to validate authenticity of the service provider; and

storing said records in a subscriber classification database;

wherein said originator type code classifies said communications service users according to at least one of:

nature of use;

communications type;

geography;

business type; and

age.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a communication from an originating communications service user and retrieving an associated record;

if said associated record contains said validation code, appending said originator type code to said communication; and

transmitting said communication to a recipient communications service user along with said originator type code;

wherein said originator type code is presented to said recipient communications service user before establishing a communication session with said originating communications service user.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

certifying said at least one service provider responsible for validating said users of communications services, said certifying comprising sharing validation information in said records with at least:

a service provider associated with an originating communications service user; and

a service provider associated with a recipient communications service user.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said nature of use classification comprises at least one of:

consumer use;

business use;

telemarketing use; and

undefined use;

wherein assigning said undefined use classification to a record associated with a communications service user results in suppressing validation of said communication transmitted by said communications service user.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said validation code is associated with a routing address of said communications service user.

6. (Currently Amended) A storage medium encoded with machine-readable computer program code for validating users of communications services, said storage medium including instructions for causing a computer to implement a method, comprising:

generating records for communications service users by at least one service provider, said records store information relating to said communications service users including:

legal liability information;

an originator type code; and

a validation code assigned to selected originator type codes, said validation code operable for facilitating validation of said communications service users, the

validation code including an encrypted key that is to be decrypted by a receiving service provider to validate authenticity of the service provider; and

storing said records in a subscriber classification database;

wherein said originator type code classifies said communications service users according to at least one of:

nature of use;

communications type;

business type;

geography; and

age.

7. (Original) The storage medium of claim 6, further comprising instructions for causing said computer to implement:

receiving a communication from an originating communications service user and retrieving an associated record;

if said associated record contains said validation code, appending said originator type code to said communication; and

transmitting said communication to a recipient communications service user along with said originator type code;

wherein said originator type code is presented to said recipient communications service user before establishing a communications session with said originating communications service user.

8. (Original) The storage medium of claim 6, further comprising instructions for causing said computer to implement:

certifying said at least one service provider responsible for validating said users of communications services, said certifying comprising sharing validation information in said records with at least:

a service provider associated with an originating communications service user; and

a service provider associated with a recipient communications service user.

9. (Original) The storage medium of claim 6, wherein said nature of use classification comprises at least one of:

- consumer use;
- business use;
- telemarketing use; and
- undefined use;

wherein assigning said undefined use classification to a record associated with a communications service user results in suppressing validation of said communication transmitted by said communications service user.

10. (Original) The storage medium of claim 6, wherein said validation code is associated with a routing address of said communications service user.

11. (Currently Amended) A system for validating users of communications services, comprising:

- an originating communications device in communication with a first service provider;
- a recipient communications device in communication with a second service provider, said second service provider in communication with said first service provider via a communications network; and

- a certified communications system executing over said communications network, said certified communications system comprising:

- a subscriber classification database storing records of said users of communications devices, said records storing information relating to said communications device users including:

- legal liability information;
    - an originator type code comprising at least one of:

- nature of use;
      - communications type;
      - business type;
      - geography; and
      - age; and
      - a validation code assigned to selected originator type codes,

said validation code operable for facilitating validation of said communications device users, the validation code including an encrypted key that is to be decrypted by the second service provider to validate authenticity of the first service provider;

wherein said certified communications system performs:

receiving a communication from an originating communications device user by said first service provider and retrieving an associated record;

if said associated record contains said validation code, appending said originator type code to said communication; and

transmitting said communication to a recipient communications device user via said second service provider along with said originator type code.

12. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein said validation code includes at least one of:

a symbol;  
a letter;  
a word;  
a picture; and  
a sound;

wherein said validation code indicates that said originating communications device user is validated; and

wherein further, said originating communications device user is accountable for said communication via said legal liability information.

13. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein said communications network includes at least one of:

a point-to-point network;  
a point-to-multipoint communications network;  
a public switched telephone network;  
a wireless network;  
a short messaging system network;

- a WiFi network;
- a local area network;
- a wide area network
- an Internet network;
- a broadcast network;
- a radio network; and
- a voice over Internet protocol network.

14. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein said records comprise business rules operable for filtering communications transmissions addressed to said recipient communications device user, said filtering based upon at least one of:

- said originator type code;
- a user name of said originating communications device user; and
- an exception report;

wherein said exception report specifies exceptions to said business rules.

15. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein said at least one service provider is certified to validate said users of communications devices, wherein certification comprises: maintaining a database of certified service providers by a centralized entity; and sharing validation information in said records with at least:

- said service provider associated with said originating communications device user; and
- said service provider associated with said recipient communications device user.

16. (Currently Amended) A communications device for validating a sender of a communication, said communications device in communication with a service provider via a network, said communications device comprising:

- a communication initiated by an originating communications device;
- a-means for assigning a purpose to said communication; and
- a-means for conveying a validation status associated with said communication, the

validation status being responsive to a validation code including an encrypted key that is to be decrypted by a receiving service provider to validate authenticity of the service provider, said validation status comprising at least one of:

valid; and

invalid;

wherein said validation status is operable for assigning accountability to a sender of said communication.

17. (Currently Amended) The communications device of claim 16, further comprising:

a-means for conveying said purpose and said validation status to a recipient communications device before establishing a communications session between said originating communications device and said recipient communications device.

18. (Currently Amended) ~~The communications device of claim 16, further comprising:~~ A communications device for validating a sender of a communication, said communications device in communication with a service provider via a network, said communications device comprising:

a communication initiated by an originating communications device;

a-means for assigning a purpose to said communication;

a-means for conveying a validation status associated with said communication, said validation status comprising at least one of:

valid; and

invalid;

wherein said validation status is operable for assigning accountability to a sender of said communication

a link to a service validator; and

a link to a record storing information relating to said sender of said communication, said record including:

legal liability information;

an originator type code associated with said user operable for identifying said purpose of a communication, said originator type code comprising at least one of:

nature of use;  
communications type;  
business type;  
geography; and  
age; and

a validation code assigned to selected originator type codes, said validation code operable for facilitating said validation status of said sender;

wherein upon initiation of said communication by said originating communications device, said service validator performs:

retrieving said record; and

if said record contains said validation code, appending said originator type code to said communication; and

alerting said recipient communications device of said communication.

19. (Original) The communications device of claim 18, wherein said validation code includes at least one of:

a symbol;  
a letter;  
a word;  
a picture; and  
a sound.